

Missouri State Archives

Finding Aid 5.18

OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE

ELECTIONS

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS, 1872-

Abstract: Records (1872-2008) related to presidential electors, including certificates of nomination, election, ascertainment, votes cast, declarations of candidacy, meeting minutes, and official ballots.

Extent: 0.4 cubic ft. (1 Hollinger boxes)

Physical Description: Paper

Location: MSA Stacks 5A/5/6

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Access Restrictions: No special restrictions.

Publication Restrictions: Copyright is in the public domain.

Preferred Citation: [Name of Document], [Date]; Elections; Presidential Electors, 1872- ; Office of Secretary of State, Record Group 5; Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City.

Acquisition Information: Various agency transfers.

Processing Information: The material for this series was pulled from miscellaneous elections and commissions files. In the future, any commissions material related to presidential electors will be placed in this series. Processed by Mary Kay Coker on November 30, 2007.

HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

The electoral college is a federal system that was designed to balance the popular vote against the rights of less populous states in the election of president and vice president of

the United States. While most people think that they are voting for a candidate, they are in fact voting for a presidential elector nominated from that candidate's party. According to state law, "A vote for any candidate for president and vice president shall be a vote for their electors" (RSMo 115.243). The candidate with the most popular votes usually wins the electoral college but not always, as in 2000 when Al Gore won the popular vote but George W. Bush won the presidency. Although there have been faithless electors who have voted other than their party desired, it is rare and has never influenced the outcome of a presidential election.

Presidential electors never meet as a body but instead convene at their respective state capitols in December to cast their votes. In Missouri, presidential electors are chosen from each congressional district plus two from the state at large (RSMo 128.010). The state committee of each established party sends a list of its nominees for presidential elector to the secretary of state with a signed and notarized declaration of candidacy from each nominee (RSMo 115.399). If an elector fails to appear at the seat of government (Jefferson City) at the appointed time, as happened in 1996, the remaining electors appoint another to fill the vacancy (RSMo 128.130).

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS, 1872-2008

Arrangement: Chronological

Scope and Content

This series contains records relating to presidential electors and the electoral college in Missouri. Coverage is haphazard until the mid-20th century. The two documents most often found here and required by federal law are the certificate of ascertainment and the certificate of vote.

The certificate of ascertainment gives the names of the electors chosen by the voters and the total number of popular votes received; it also names all other candidates for elector and the number of votes received. The certificate of vote states the number of electoral votes, as opposed to popular votes, cast for president and vice president. Multiple original copies of these documents are produced and sent to various agencies, including the National Archives and Records Administration.

Other records in this series include declinations of nomination, certificates of election for electors, meeting agenda and minutes, official ballots, voting procedures, and media coverage. In 1996, when an elector failed to appear, there are ballots and a certificate of appointment to fill the vacancy.

Container List

Location	Box	Folder	Date	Contents
5A/5/6	1	1	1872	Certificate of election of electors
5A/5/6	1	2	1892	Certificates of nomination and declination for Democratic and Republican electors
5A/5/6	1	3	1896	Certificates of nomination and declination for Democratic, National Party, and People's Party electors
5A/5/6	1	4	1908	Certificates of nomination and declination for Democratic, Independent, People's Party, and Republican electors
5A/5/6	1	5	1912	Certificates of nomination and declination for Democratic, Progressive, Republican, and Socialist Labor electors
5A/5/6	1	6	1916	Certificates of nomination for Democratic electors
5A/5/6	1	7	1952	Minutes of meeting of electors; agenda of meeting of electors; record of meeting of electors; certificate of vote

5A/5/6	1	8	1956	Certificates of nomination for Democratic and Republican electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote
5A/5/6	1	9	1964	Certificate of vote; certificate of ascertainment
5A/5/6	1	10	1968	Certificates of nomination for American Party, Democratic, and Republican electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote; minutes of meeting of electors; letter and newspaper clipping on meeting
5A/5/6	1	11	1972	Certificates of nomination for Democratic and Republican electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote
5A/5/6	1	12	1976	Certificates of nomination for Democratic, Independent, and Republican electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote
5A/5/6	1	13	1980	Certificates of nomination and declarations of candidacy for Democratic, Libertarian, Republican, and Socialist Workers electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote
5A/5/6	1	14	1984	Certificates of nomination and declarations of candidacy for Democratic, Libertarian, and Republican electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote
5A/5/6	1	15	1988	Certificates of nomination and declarations of candidacy for Democratic, Libertarian, New Alliance Party, and Republican electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote
5A/5/6	1	16	1992	Certificates of nomination and declarations of candidacy for Democratic, Libertarian, Independent, Natural Law Party, and Republican electors
5A/5/6	1	17	1996	Electoral college voting procedures; official ballots for electoral votes for president, vice president, and to fill a vacancy amongst electors; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of appointment to fill vacancy; certificate of vote; certificate of ballots
5A/5/6	1	18	2000	Certificates of election for electors; certificate of ascertainment; blank form to fill vacancy amongst electors
5A/5/6	1	19	2004	Official ballots for electoral votes for president and vice-president; certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote

5A/5/6	1	20	2008	Certificate of ascertainment; certificate of vote
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